

# Home from Home Care With Slough Children First





**...Give a *little* time,  
Make a *big* difference...**

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## What is Home from Home care?

Being part of Home from Home involves caring for someone else's child/ young person with a disability. This could be for:

- A few hours a week during the day or an evening on a regular basis
- A day a week in the school holidays

Home from Home care is a way of giving parents a break from caring for their child, but the children also benefit just as much as their families.

Home from Home offers great opportunities for children to experience new activities, and to interact and form relationships with carers and their families.



**"We have fun together, just doing everyday things. It means the world to me just to see her smile." - Carer**

## Why become a Home from Home carer?

Home from Home carers come from a wide range of backgrounds, but the starting point for almost all of them is the realisation that they could make a difference.

Taking care of a child/ young person with a disability can be demanding at times, but can also be one of the most rewarding challenges of life.

By becoming a Home from Home carer we hope you will gain real satisfaction and have fun.



## Why is Home from Home carers needed?

It is often thought that shared care is simply a way of giving parents a break from caring for their child, but the children can benefit from short breaks just as much as their families.

Most of our children using the scheme attend special schools, and may not always have the opportunity to develop friendships with other children in their neighbourhood.

Home from Home offers great opportunities for children to experience new activities, and to interact and form relationships with their carers.

For the child's parents, Home from Home gives them the opportunity to spend time with their other children or to simply recharge their batteries.



## Could you be a Home from Home carer?

There are a diverse range of children with disabilities in Slough that need the type of help that you may be able to offer them.

You do not need to have previous experience of caring for children with disabilities to become a Home from Home carer, although some experience with children would be beneficial.

Above all, carers must be able to provide a secure and caring environment, be willing to attend training and have a stable lifestyle.

Patience, energy and sense of fun always help.



**“I love Home from Home as it gives me a new place to have fun with my carer.” - Child**



## Who are our children?

Home from Home is a service for children/ young people aged 0-17 years who have a wide range of disabilities:

- Physical disabilities could include cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy and hemiplegia
- Learning disabilities could include Down's syndrome and developmental delay
- Some children may have autistic spectrum disorder
- Some children may have sensory needs, for example hearing and vision impairments or multiple disabilities

First and foremost they are children with their own individual characters, needs and preferences.

**“I have been involved with Home from Home for 14 years. I have seen many of the children I look after develop in a positive way. This is enormously satisfying” - Carer**





## What does being a Home from Home carer involve?

It may just be doing everyday activities, such as going to the shops, watching a DVD, playing a game, reading a book, gardening, baking a cake or simply taking a walk in the park to feed the ducks.

Simple things which help enrich children's lives and are much more enjoyable when shared.

A child will expect you to:

- Always treat them as part of the family
- Listen and talk to them
- Provide clear, firm but fair boundaries
- Protect them and provide for their identified needs
- Be there for reassurance and trust
- Provide friendship

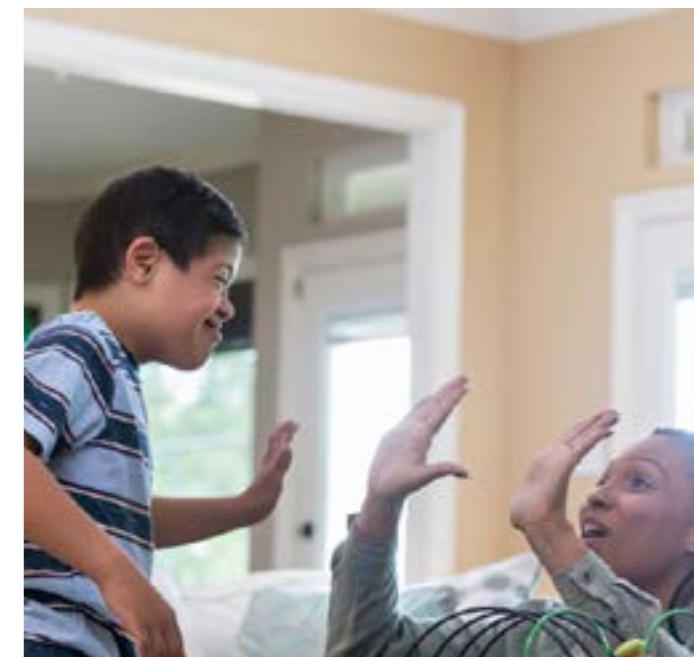
**"If you are thinking of doing something in your spare time, then do this. It is so rewarding, lots of fun and will have lots of laughs." - Carer**

## Practical support

The children who use Home from Home usually live at home with their parents so carers will be working with their parents in partnership.

As a Home from Home carer you will not be left to work alone. Slough Children First offers ongoing support to all our carers.

- You will receive regular visits from your Carer Coordinator (more regularly at the beginning when it is new)
- You will receive access to training and will have an annual review to assess any further training that you may need in order to continue to provide care
- You will have the chance to meet other carers through outings and social events organised specially for carers and their families by the Home from Home workers



- You will have access to an out of hours social work service for use in an emergency



## Financial support

As a Home from Home carer you are classed as a volunteer but you will receive a small expenses payment each time you spend time with the child you are introduced to.

You will need to submit a claim form on a monthly basis. This payment is expected to cover the cost of your meals and entertainment as well as a small contribution towards the running costs of your home.

Your child's expenses need to be negotiated with their parents.

You can also claim mileage for collecting and returning a child to and from their home, should you be requested to do so.

We will lend you some equipment to enable you to provide a safe environment to care for any children from the scheme e.g. stair gate, car seat.



**I know how challenging children can be and with special needs it can be difficult. I love children and enjoy spending time with them and wanted to help others in the community." - Carer**

## Home from Home enquiries, applications and assessment

Once you have contacted us, we will phone you to have a discussion.

If you wish to continue your Home from Home enquiry, we will arrange a visit to you to exchange information and talk it through with you in more detail.

If becoming a Home from Home carer still feels right for you, we will ask you to complete a registration of interest form.

Once we have received your registration of interest, we will write to you to let you know whether it has been successful.



Stage 1 of your assessment starts here. It is a three month process.



You will be allocated a Carer Coordinator who will discuss the assessment process plan with you.

Checks, medicals and references will be started and you will need to provide us with some written information about yourself.



Once stage 1 is completed satisfactorily, we will discuss your progress to stage 2 with you.

We will help you to learn more about Home from Home by attending a preparation course (when available) and meeting Home from Home carers.



We will write to confirm that you can start stage 2.



Stage 2 of your assessment is a four month process led by your Carer Coordinator.



Your Carer Coordinator visits and completes the stage 2 assessment plan with you.

It may be possible for you to visit a Home from Home carer in this stage too.

We agree to take your assessment to panel.

Your Carer Coordinator carries out your full assessment. They will be letting you know throughout how you're doing.



Your assessment is presented to panel and a recommendation made.

Your assessment is completed and written up. You will be given an opportunity to read and comment on it.

Your personal references are visited and employer and ex-partner references are taken up.

You might receive a 'second opinion' visit from a representative of the Connected Persons Team.



The agency decision maker finalises the decision regarding your suitability to become a Home from Home carer.

## Your questions answered

### 1. What kind of people become Home from Home carers?

All types of people can become Home from Home carers - people with or without children, single people or couples, people living in rented or private accommodation and those who may or may not be in full or part-time employment.

We welcome enquiries from people from a wide range of ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds.

### 2. Do I need experience of working with children with disabilities?

We are looking for adults with good parenting and life skills.

Many of our Home form Home carers had no experience of disabilities before they joined our Home from Home scheme.

Little or no experience is not a barrier, but a willingness to listen, learn and take on new perspectives and experiences is a must.

### 3. Are there any age restrictions?

The minimum age to become a Home from Home carer is 21 years of age.

There is no upper age limit as long as you are in good health, physically able to care for a child with disabilities and can meet all the other requirements.

### 4. Are there any health restrictions?

All enquiries are considered on an individual basis.

However, as long as your health concerns are not life threatening and our medical advisor considers that the concerns will not impact on your capacity to be an effective carer we will be happy to consider your application.





### 5. What if I smoke?

We follow advice from Coram BAAF (British Association for Adoption and Fostering) and the Department of Health and Social Care regarding smoking and passive smoking.

We will not place a child under five, a child with a medical condition such as asthma or a child with limited mobility in a household where adults smoke.

We would not refuse enquiries from people who smoke, but would strongly encourage anyone who does smoke to take active steps to quit, as this is likely to benefit you and any children in your care.

### 6. What time do I need to be able to offer?

Initially you would be introduced to one child.

If you later decide you would be interested in caring for another child at a different time to the first, this can be discussed.

The time needed for each child varies from individual to individual. It can be just a few hours a week during the day or evening on a regular basis or a day a week in school holidays.

### 7. How are carers linked to children?

A Home from Home Carer Coordinator will take into account your accommodation, locality, means of transport, ages of your own children, your interests and the amount of time you have to offer the scheme, as well as your own wishes and preferences in terms of how you feel able to offer your care and support.

This will help us to identify the child and family who would benefit most from your help.

The Carer Coordinator will always try to link you with a child who will get on well with you and your family and vice versa.

### 8. Will I be expected to have the child straight away?

No, initial introductions are made, then if you are happy to continue we will arrange a short visit to see how the child settles with you.

Then it is up to you and the child's parents to gradually increase the time to the agreed amount.

### 9. What do I do if I find that being a Home from Home carer is not for me?

If at any stage of the approval process you feel that you no longer want to continue with your application feel free to discuss this with us.



## How to contact us

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<https://fosterforslough.com/fostering/home-from-home/>







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